

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

66610

DRAFTED BY: NEA/GRK:GTCHURCHILL:PR

APPROVED BY: NEA/GRK:GTCHURCHILL

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R 302210Z JAN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 017657

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 017657 ACTION ATHENS 26 JAN

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 017657

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, US, GR

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO GREEK EMBASSY ON ARAB TERRORISTS

REF: ATHENS 0561; STATE 017050

1. DEPASSTSEC DAVIES MADE FOLLOWING POINTS REGARDING ARAB TERRORISTS TO STAMATIOU, FIRST SECRETARY, GREEK EMBASSY (GREEK CHARGE WAS ILL). STAMATIOU WAS PROVIDED WITH "BOU DE PAPIER" TO ENSURE CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OUR DEMARCHE.

A. THE STRONG STAND OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GREECE IN REFUSING TO RELEASE TER*ORISTS AT THE TIME OF THE ROME INCIDENT, AND IN BRINGING THEM TO TRIAL DESPITE THE OBVIOUS RISK OF REPRISALS HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED BY ALL AS A CONSTRUCTIVE, FORWARD STEP IN THE BATTLE AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM.

B. TERRORIST ATTACKS SUCH AS ATHENS AND ROME INCIDENTS

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POSE THE GRAVEST OF THREATS TO THE RULE OF LAW AND ORDERLY

LIFE OF CIVILIZED NATIONS.

C. OUR CONSIDERED OPINION IS THAT SUCH INCIDENTS CAN ONLY BE REDUCED--AND HOPEFULLY EVENTUALLY ELIMINATED--BY PUNISHING CRIMINALS OF THIS KIND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF THE COUNTRIES WHERE THE OFFENSES ARE COMMITTED.

D. WE HAVE NOTED AND BEEN CONCERNED BY AN AP STORY DATED JANUARY 25 SAYING THAT THE GOG IS EXPECTED TO DEPORT THE TWO ARAB TERRORISTS CONVICTED OF MURDER ON JANUARY 24. THE STORY APPARENTLY REFLECTS A PERSISTENT RUMOR TO THE SAME EFFECT IN ATHENS AND ABROAD.

E. WE BELIEVE FREEING OF CRIMINAL TERRORISTS WITHOUT ADEQUATE PUNISHMENT WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL IN THE CAMPAIGN TO END MINDLESS TERRORISM WE BELIEVE THAT YIELDING TO PRESSURES DOES NOT REMOVE RISKS OF FURTHER TERRORIST ACTS BUT RATHER INCREASES THEM FOR ALL.

2. STAMATIOU SAID HE WOULD CABLE ATHENS AT ONCE. HE REFERRED TO TETENES PRESS STATEMENT JANUARY 25 (NOT YET RECEIVED HERE) INDICATING THAT JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS REGARDING ARAB TERRORISTS NOT YET COMPLETED AS DEFENSE INTENDED APPEAL. RUSH UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE017657
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/GRK:GTCHURCHILL:PR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974014/aaaaadcu.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 ATHENS 0561, 74 STATE 017050
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 MAY 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <24 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEMARCHE TO GREEK EMBASSY ON ARAB TERRORISTS
TAGS: PINS, US, GR
To: BEIRUT
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005